

PN-3822

PRJ-3.00

Grand Teton Canal Company
228 North Highway 33
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Subject: Participation in the Henrys Fork Basin Study Workgroup

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the State of Idaho are conducting the Henrys Fork Basin Study (Study) to assess potential for water supply development and improved water management in the Henrys Fork Basin (Basin). This study will review and assess options in the Basin to develop additional water supply (storage) and improve water management through conservation, infrastructure improvements, water markets or other means. The intent of the Study is to identify potential actions that could meet current and future water supply needs in the Basin and help meet State water management needs in downstream areas. For more information on the Study, including summaries of related meetings held to date, please visit Reclamation's website at www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/studies/idaho/henrys_fork/index.html or just Google "usbr henrys fork".

The Study is being conducted in a collaborative manner, with involvement by the full spectrum of stakeholder groups, agencies, and jurisdictions. The Henrys Fork Watershed Council (Council) has agreed to provide a forum for stakeholder participation, with Study-related Workgroup meetings occurring at the regularly scheduled Council meetings. Under the Council umbrella, Reclamation is forming a core Workgroup composed of representatives from all key constituencies.

This core group is intended to ensure that all key stakeholder groups participate in the process through specific identification/assignment of a representative who will attend all Workgroup meetings rather than a more ad hoc attendance of groups at Council meetings under normal conditions. Further, given the likely complexity of the Study, attendance by core group members at all Workgroup meetings is important so that designated representatives participate in each step of the process and are aware of all background as decisions and recommendations are made.

The Grand Teton Canal Company is invited to participate in this Workgroup. If you wish to participate, we ask that you assign an individual with an alternate if needed, who can attend all of the Workgroup meetings, as listed below, and can articulate and speak for your interests as the Study proceeds.

Meeting Date	Topics for Discussion
Nov 16, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues, Constraints, Opportunities, Ideas—final listing (<i>see attached listing derived from the stakeholder meeting on October 19, 2010</i>) • Goals, Objectives & Criteria
Jan 12, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals, Objectives & Criteria—complete if necessary • Potential Actions/Elements of Alternatives
Feb 15, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential Actions/Elements of Alternatives
Mar 15, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Alternatives for Reconnaissance Analysis
Jul [TBD], 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Technical Team of Reconnaissance Analysis Results
Aug [TBD], 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Technical Team of Reconnaissance Analysis Results

If full participation in the core Workgroup by a senior representative of your organization is not necessary, you certainly may choose to be involved more informally. For example, all Workgroup meetings will be open to the public, and opportunities will be provided at each meeting for attendees outside the core group to provide observations and comments. Alternatively, you may identify one of the other agencies or groups who will be part of the core Workgroup (see attached list) to adequately represent your interests.

As noted above, the next stakeholder group meeting will on November 16, 2010. The goal is to have the core Workgroup formed before this meeting and to focus discussions on the group at the meeting. Given this timetable, please **contact Mr. Bob Schattin, Activity Manager at Reclamation by November 8, 2010** to identify your designated representative (name, phone number and email address) or indicate that you intend to participate in a less formal manner. Mr. Schattin can be contacted by phone at 208-378-5090, by mail at *Bureau of Reclamation, 1150 Curtis Rd. Ste. 100, Boise, ID 83706*, or by email at gen-PNR-Henrysfork@usbr.gov.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Carri Hessman
Acting Program Manager, Liaison and Coordination

Attachments:

- Stakeholder Group/Constituency List for Core Workgroup
- Issues, Opportunities, Constraints and Ideas—Input received at Workgroup meeting 3

Core Workgroup List

- American Rivers
- BLM
- City of Ashton
- City of Rexburg
- Committee of Nine
- Eastern Idaho Water Rights Coalition
- Falls River Electric Cooperative
- Forest Service
- Freemont County
- Fremont Madison Irrigation District
- Friends of the Teton
- General Public
- Grand Teton Canal Company
- Greater Yellowstone Coalition
- Henrys Fork Foundation
- Henrys Lake Canal Company
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Idaho Department of Water Resources
- Idaho Ground Water Association
- Idaho Rivers United
- Idaho Water Users Association
- Magic Valley Irrigation Districts
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts of the Henrys Fork Basin
- Teton County
- Trout Unlimited
- Water District 1

Henry's Fork Basin Study***Issues, Opportunities, Constraints and Ideas—Input received at Workgroup meeting 3***

The following listing of issues, opportunities, constraints and ideas that should be considered in the Henrys Fork Basin Study reflects input received from attendees at the Henrys Fork Watershed Council meeting of October 19, 2010. The Council is the umbrella organization through which stakeholder participation in the Study is being organized and conducted.

Water Supply**General**

- Conduct a needs assessment; how much water is needed?
 - Cities and counties?
 - Agriculture?
 - Other uses?
- Quantify the water supply--how much do we really have and when is it available?

- Assess and consider existing supply and management conditions (especially surface-groundwater interactions)
- Use this landscape-level study as an opportunity to shape the future--economic, environmental, land use
 - Shape water demand
 - Shape water use
- Assess the interest/role of the Magic Valley water uses in this alternatives analysis. Outreach to downstream users will be important. Some consensus with these users will likely be necessary to act on significant water supply development in the Henrys Fork Basin. At present, Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) is keeping downstream users informed about this study.
- Improve the predictability and reliability of the water supply. Use available scenario planning tools.
- Plan for the influence of climate change on future water supply and management. USBR has conducted a study of climate change impact on the Snake River system.

Storage

- Existing storage is committed. New storage would provide the opportunity to meet new needs and accomplish new things
- There is a need for new water storage, especially to support local uses
- Provide new storage within Water District 1 to support all uses
 - Irrigation (especially augmenting end-of-season supply)
 - CDMI (supporting anticipated city and county growth)
 - Power production
- Keep regional needs and benefits in mind as well as local (including such purposes as meeting mitigation requirements and/or ESPA CAMP objectives)
- Additional storage = flexibility. The Henrys Fork Basin is high in the river system; thus storage in this basin is more broadly beneficial
- Related to surface storage, look at off-stream opportunities, not just on-stream
- Consider aquifer storage as an alternative to surface storage, especially given the challenges of accomplishing new surface storage
- Consider aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) as a option to meet supply needs
- Locate new storage to meet identified need (i.e., storage location/elevation dictates where the stored water can be efficiently delivered)
- With new storage, rights will be junior. Given this, an important consideration will be how often it will fill. Can we actually accomplish our water supply objectives?
- Protect supply to existing groundwater users (groundwater is drying up)
- Explore potential for hydroelectric development, including small scale projects
- Assess flood control needs and potential benefits from new storage

Water Operations and Management

- Protect current operations of the Henrys Fork as part of the larger Snake River system
- Increase flexibility in water use and management, especially for fisheries
- Enhance the ability to get water where it is needed, WHEN it is needed (timing of supply availability is important)
- Explore the role of/potential for conservation and improved water management to meet supply needs

- Municipal
- Water distribution system
- Automation and other infrastructure improvements
- Opportunities to for reuse/recycling (e.g. use reclaimed wastewater for ornamental landscape irrigation and for snow making)

Water Rights

- Relationship between new storage rights and existing rights (e.g., state recharge rights, the existing river system)
- Protect existing water rights
- Increase supply reliability for existing junior water rights, which are impacted every year
- There is no process for municipalities to augment their supply to meet growth needs
- Are the original Teton Dam water rights still valid? Although the dam is still authorized, the rights may not have been perfected; it is likely that reconstructing Teton Dam would involve current/junior rights.
- Are we already over-appropriated?

Environmental Considerations

- Assess the impacts of any current actions on ecological conditions in the lower Henry's Fork and Teton Rivers. Look at the impact from the failure of the original dam as instructive
- Balance need for storage with protection of fish and wildlife habitat
- Balance meeting needs of irrigation with protection of fish and wildlife
- Pursue opportunity to evaluate the needs of irrigation and fisheries resources together
- No water supply/storage solution should push species (such as the Yellowstone cutthroat trout) further toward extinction (i.e., into threatened or endangered status or worsening existing status as threatened or endangered)
- Use potential for impact on the wetlands in the lower Henry's Fork as a key metric in evaluating water development and management alternatives. These wetlands are ranked number one in preservation priority by IDFG in the Idaho Wetlands Plan.
- Consider impact on recreation and tourism when evaluating storage options
- Retain all stream reaches currently identified as eligible for Wild and Scenic River status in their current condition; protect their outstandingly remarkable values.
- Assess both the pro's and con's of barriers to fish passage

Economics

- Assess impact of alternatives on the local and regional economy
- Promote economic security
- How will alternatives be paid for? Who will pay? Can the communities afford potential projects/actions?
- Participation in water development should be "pay to play"
- Assess benefit/cost ratio of alternatives

Study Process and Results

- Challenge of pursuing and analyzing all these questions at this level of planning and within available budget. A key to meeting this challenge will be the objectives and criteria we choose to compare alternatives.
- Technical data and studies used in this process (whether previously done or new) must be

trustworthy/credible

- Studies used to support this process should be widely disseminated
- Prepare an annotated bibliography of related studies and relevant data
- Provide a summary of work-to-date (prior and on-going studies relevant to this process); provide historical background
- This study should be cost-effective, meeting constituent needs